

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 VATICAN 000929

SIPDIS

FOR EUR/WE (MENNUUTI), NEA/NGA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/25/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [VT](#) [VTPREL](#)

SUBJECT: ROME PUK REP SEEKS VATICAN ACCESS

REF: A) ROME 657 B) VATICAN 683

CLASSIFIED BY: AMBASSADOR JIM NICHOLSON, REASON E.O. 12958 (D)

1. (C) SUMMARY: ROME PUK REPRESENTATIVE BAKER FATTAH MET WITH POLOFF FEBRUARY 25 TO DISCUSS PUK EFFORTS TO GAIN VATICAN ATTENTION FOR THE KURDISH CAUSE. FATTAH TOLD POLOFF THAT THE PUK HAD BEEN TRYING TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE HOLY SEE
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VATICA 00929 01 OF 02 061607Z
AND HAD SOUGHT AN AUDIENCE WITH THE POPE FOR "PM" SALIH DURING IRAQI DPM TAREQ AZIZ' VISIT TO ITALY. THE HOLY SEE INSTEAD SET UP A MEETING FOR SALIH WITH ARCHBISHOP RENATO MARTINO, PRESIDENT OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE, WHERE THE KURDISH DELEGATION RECEIVED THE STANDARD HOLY SEE LINE -- THAT IT COULD NEVER BE SEEN TO SUPPORT A WAR, EVEN TO LIBERATE THE KURDISH PEOPLE, AND ANY DECISION FOR MILITARY ACTION MUST BE TAKEN BY THE UN TO BE LEGITIMATE. FATTAH VOLUNTEERED HIS "STRONG CONCERN" AT ANY TURKISH EFFORT TO DISARM THE KURDS IN EVENT OF A WAR, AND ASSURED US THAT HIS PEOPLE WANTED TO ENTER A POWER SHARING ARRANGEMENT IN BAGHDAD. FATTAH DID NOT FORESEE THE RISE OF INTERCOMMUNAL CONFLICT AFTER THE "LIBERATION OF IRAQ," -- INSISTING THAT IRAQ DID NOT HAVE A HISTOR OF CIVIL WAR. WE ENCOURAGED FATTAH TO CONTACT TE HOLY SEE MFA COUNTRY DIRECTOR FOR THE MIDDLE EST MONS. FRANCO COPPOLA, WHO HAD JUST RETURNED FRO BAGHDAD WITH PAPAL S/E ETCHEGARRAY (REF B), AS FIRST STEP TO GAINING A POSSIBLE PAPAL AUDIENCEFOR SALIH. WE BELIEVE THAT SUCH AN AUDIENCE COUL HIGHLIGHT THE HOLY SEE'S CONCERN FOR HUMANITARIN CONDITIONS IN IRAQ, BUT THAT POPE WOULD NOT SE THE PUK WHILE HE STILL HOLDS HOPE TO AVOID WAR. UCH A MEETING COULD, HOWEVER, TAKE PLACE ONCE TH UNSC TAKES A DECISION TO ENFORCE UNSCR 1441. EN SUMMARY.

PUK EFFORTS TO AVERT AZIZ AUDIENCE; SECURE AUDIENCE WITH POPE

12. (C) EMBASSY VATICAN JOINED EMBASSY ROME IN FACILITATING VATICAN CONTACTS FOR US CITIZEN AND INDICT NGO DIRECTOR CHARLES FORREST (REF A) DURING IRAQI DFM TAREQ AZIZ' FEBRUARY
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VATICA 00929 01 OF 02 061607Z
VISIT TO ITALY. (NOTE: INDICT SEEKS INFORMATION TO PRESS CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST IRAQI LEADERS GUILTY OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY; FORREST, WORKING WITH THE LOCAL PUK OFFICE, UNSUCCESSFULLY SOUGHT TO DEVELOP ARREST WARRANTS FOR AZIZ DURING HIS ITALY/VATICAN VISITS). FORREST SUBSEQUENTLY ADVISED LOCAL PUK REPRESENTATIVE BAKER FATTAH TO CONTACT EMBASSY VATICAN TO SOLICIT ADVICE ON HOW BEST TO PRESS THE PUK MESSAGE WITH THE HOLY SEE. MEETING OVER COFFEE ON FEBRUARY 25, FATTAH TOLD POLOFF THAT THE PUK HAD BEEN TRYING FOR WEEKS TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE HOLY SEE IN ORDER TO REMIND THE HOLY SEE OF THE IRAQI REGIME'S ATROCIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD AND TO CONVINCE THE POPE NOT MEET TAREQ AZIZ.

13. (C) FATTAH AND FORREST FORMALLY REQUESTED AN AUDIENCE WITH THE POPE FOR PUK "FM" BARHAN SALIH (PH) DURING THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 17, BUT WERE REFERRED INSTEAD TO ARCHBISHOP RENATO MARTINO. MARTINO IS THE FORMER HOLY SEE UN PERMANENT OBSERVER, AND RECENTLY TOOK OVER AS PRESIDENT OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE -- THE HOLY SEE DICASTRY (NOTE: CABINET DEPARTMENT) THAT DEALS WITH JUSTICE, PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES. ACCORDING TO FATTAH, MARTINO REITERATED THE STANDARD HOLY SEE POSITION THAT IT COULD NEVER BE SEEN TO SUPPORT WAR, AND THAT ANY MILITARY ACTION IN IRAQ WOULD NEED TO BE APPROVED BY THE UN TO BE LEGITIMATE. FATTAH MENTIONED THAT SANT'EGIDIO COMMUNITY SPIRITUAL LEADER DON MATTEO ZUPPI HAD ALSO COUNSELED THAT IT WAS USELESS TO TRY TO PERSUADE THE HOLY SEE PUBLICLY TO SUPPORT A WAR, EVEN TO LIBERATE IRAQIS SUFFERING FROM SADDAM'S OPPRESSION. FATTAH SAID HE WAS NOT HOPEFUL THAT THE POPE WOULD EVER MEET WITH SALIH. (NOTE: WE TOO HAD SHARED INTERNET BASED REPORTS OF SADDAM'S ATROCITIES, INCLUDING THE HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH REPORT
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 VATICA 00929 01 OF 02 061607Z
ON THE ANFAL CAMPAIGNS, WITH THE HOLY SEE DFM SHORTLY BEFORE AZIZ'S VISIT.)

COMMENTARY ON POST-WAR SCENARIO

14. (C) FATTAH TOLD US HE THOUGHT WAR WAS CLOSER THAN EVER. HE VOLUNTEERED, HOWEVER, THAT THE KURDS WERE VERY CONCERNED THAT THE TURKS WOULD OCCUPY "KURDISTAN" TO DISARM KURDS. IF THIS HAPPENED, HE OBSERVED, "THINGS WOULD GET VERY BAD." HE ASSURED US THAT, FAR FROM WANTING INDEPENDENCE, THE KURDS WISHED TO ENTER A DEMOCRATIC POWER-SHARING ARRANGEMENT IN BAGHDAD. "WE ONLY WANT FORTY PERCENT OF THE OIL REVENUES, FOR DEVELOPMENT," HE NOTED. FATTAH WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT IRAQ COULD AVOID A CIVIL WAR AFTER SADDAM, BECAUSE "WE HAVE NO HISTORY OF CIVIL WAR - JUST OF STRUGGLE AGAINST CORRUPT REGIMES."

COMMENT

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ8236

PAGE 01 VATICA 00929 02 OF 02 061607Z
ACTION EUR-00

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 AMAD-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 DS-00 VC-00
TEDE-00 INR-00 IO-00 VCE-00 NEA-00 NSAE-00 PA-00
PM-00 SSO-00 SS-00 PMB-00 DSCC-00 PRM-00 DRL-01
SAS-00 /001W

-----4033CE 061608Z /38

O 061506Z MAR 03
FM AMEMBASSY VATICAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE
EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 VATICAN 000929

SIPDIS

FOR EUR/WE (MENNUITI), NEA/NGA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/25/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [VT](#) [VTPREL](#)

SUBJECT: ROME PUK REP SEEKS VATICAN ACCESS

15. (C) WE TOLD BOTH FORREST AND FATTAH THAT THE HOLY SEE'S PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FOR A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION TO THE IRAQ CRISIS IS MOTIVATED BY A VARIETY OF CONCERNS. THESE INCLUDE ITS FEAR OF AN IRAQ WAR DESTABILIZING THE ENTIRE MIDDLE EAST AND PERHAPS CATALYZING A GLOBAL STRUGGLE BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM, ITS STRONG DESIRE NOT TO COMPROMISE ITS ONGOING

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VATICA 00929 02 OF 02 061607Z
DIALOGUE WITH MUSLIM LEADERS, AND ITS CONCERN FOR THE SAFETY OF CHRISTIAN MINORITIES IN THE MUSLIM WORLD. HOWEVER, WE SUPPORTED FORREST'S EFFORTS TO HAVE AN MEETING WITH THE HOLY SEE TO DISCUSS INDICT'S WORK, AND REFERRED HIM TO A CONTACT IN THE MFA (WITH WHOM HE SUBSEQUENTLY MET). WE ALSO ENCOURAGED FATTAH TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP CONTACTS WITHIN THE HOLY SEE. WE UNDERScored WITH FATTAH THAT THE POPE COULD NEITHER CANCEL THE AZIZ AUDIENCE NOR MEET WITH SALIH SO LONG AS HE WAS HOPING FOR A SUCCESSFUL BAGHDAD VISIT BY HIS "TROUBLESHOOTING CARDINAL" ROGER ETCHEGARRAY (REF B). WE SUGGESTED TO FATTAH THAT A MORE FRUITFUL AVENUE FOR THE PUK TO THE HOLY SEE MIGHT BE VIA THE IRAQI CHALDEAN PATRIARCH -- BUT HE WAS NOT OPEN TO THAT, SAYING THE PATRIARCH "WAS IN THE PAY OF SADDAM, JUST LIKE BENJAMIN" (NOTE: FRANCISCAN FATHER BENJAMIN -- A SOMEWHAT UNSTABLE "SINGING NO-GLOBAL ACTIVIST" WHO ORGANIZES RELIEF WORK IN IRAQ -- SPONSORED AZIZ'S ITALY VISIT). NOTWITHSTANDING, WE ENCOURAGED FATTAH AT LEAST TO SEEK AN APPOINTMENT WITH VATICAN MFA COUNTRY DIRECTOR FOR THE MIDDLE EAST MONS. FRANCO COPPOLA, WHO HAD JUST RETURNED FROM ACCOMPANYING ETCHEGARRAY TO BAGHDAD.

16. (C) THE POPE HIMSELF WILL CONTINUE TO AVOID ANY SIGNAL THAT THE VATICAN EVEN TACITLY SUPPORTS A WAR OPTION FOR IRAQ, INCLUDING BY AVOIDING MEETING WITH SALIH. THAT IS, UNTIL A WAR BREAKS OUT. AT THAT POINT, THE POPE MAY BE WILLING TO MEET WITH THE PUK PM TO UNDERScore THE NEED FOR HUMANITARIAN RELIEF AND TO TRY TO FORESTALL INTERCOMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN IRAQ.
NICHOLSON

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VATICA 00929 02 OF 02 061607Z

CONFIDENTIAL

>